Attack on foreign women tourists

84. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:
SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether following increasing incidents of attacks on tourists especially on foreign women tourists, the Centre has convened a meeting with the State Governments to review safety and security aspects in January, 2008;

(b) if so, whether during the meeting, the Union Tourism Secretary has referred to recent media reports of harassment and attack on women tourists;

(c) if so, the outcome of the discussions held with the State Governments to protect the foreign tourists;

(d) whether any concrete plan of action has been prepared;

(e) what are the details of the same; and

(f) by when they are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (f) 'Public Order' and 'Police' are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. As such, the prevention of crime, including crimes against tourists, is the primary responsibility of State Governments/Union Territories. Following recent reports in the media regarding harassment and misbehavior with tourists in India, the Ministry of Tourism discussed the issue of safety and security of tourists, amongst other issues, with Secretaries of Tourism of States/Union Territories, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Defence. It was emphasised that ensuring the safety and security of tourists is of paramount importance and State Governments/Union Territories must ensure the same.

Projects pending in Rajasthan

†85. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the project-wise details of various projects pending with the Central Government for its approval for the development and promotion of tourism in Rajasthan;

(b) the necessary action so far taken by Government to accord its approval to these proposals; and

(c) by when various projects for the development of tourism of the State would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Development and promotion of tourism is undertaken primarily by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, extends financial assistance to the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for tourism related projects, which are identified in consultation and interaction with them under scheme of Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits.

Project proposals received from the State Governments/Union Territories that are complete

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

in all respect and approved on the basis of *inter-se* priority and funds released subject to availability under respective head.

No proposal from the Government of Rajasthan for development and promotion of tourism complete in all respects is pending with the Ministry of Tourism.

Implementation of projects is the responsibility of the State Government. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India monitors the progress of the projects from time to time through review meetings and inspection visits by officers of the Ministry.

Exploration of places of Ramayana age in Sri Lanka

†86. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that places connected with Shri Ram, Sita, Ravan and Hanumanji have been found in Sri Lanka during the exploration being carried out by Government of Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, the details of the results of exploration made till date;

(c) whether Government is considering to extend co-operation in the exploration of the places connected with Shri Ram, Sita, Ravan and Hanumanji taking inspiration from Government of Sri Lanka;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (e) The Ministry of Culture has no information regarding such archaeological explorations by the Government of Sri Lanka.

Depletion of water table

87. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the blocks or districts in the country that have been included in the dark zone following depletion of water table there;

(b) whether any steps like the recharging process have been initiated in these districts; and

(c) if so, with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) As per the assessment of ground water resources carried out by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) jointly with States in 2004, out of 5723 assessment units (Blocks/Mandals/Talukas) in the country, 839 units have been categorized as 'Over-exploited', 226 units as 'Critical' and 550 as 'Semi-critical'.

(b) and (c) The measures taken for promoting rain water harvesting and artificial recharge include demonstrative recharge projects, scheme for "Artificial Recharge to ground water

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.